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Assistant Secretary's Daily Activity Report

Office of Andean Affairs

April 9, 2002

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VENEZUELA

(C) General Strike Launched, May Continue Tomorrow; Chávez Strike Successful:

- The Venezuelan Confederation of Workers (CTV), supported by the National Federation of Chambers of Commerce (FEDECAMARAS) launched its general strike today. While

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was not as comprehensive as the December 10 work stoppage,

- Some PDVSA operations were affected, but the strike did not shut down the state oil company's operations. Some refineries and off-loading facilities were operating at only 50 percent capacity while others were operating as normal.
- Chávez denied that the strike was successful, asserting it was "fracasado."
- Throughout the day, Chávez called over a dozen *cadenas*. [Note: Venezuela's telecommunications law obliges broadcasters to cover government addresses when the president declares a *cadena*.] Media outlets accused Chávez of abusing this privilege, asserting that it amounted to censorship. Towards the end of the day, television broadcasts were using split screens.
- Bolivarian Circle members gathered at the National Assembly, PDVSA headquarters, and CTV headquarters. While there was some pushing and shoving, ample security forces appeared to be in control of the situation. (*Steuart/Naranjo telcon, Ard/Naranjo telcon, Cook/Naranjo telcon*)

WHA/AND: J Farrar

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